

1 **CLAIMS**

2 1. A method of obtaining and presenting multimedia content, the
3 method comprising:

4 selecting multimedia content to be rendered at a network client;
5 accepting a speed designation at the network client from a human user
6 independently of the selecting;
7 streaming a composite media stream from a network server, the composite
8 media stream representing the selected multimedia content;
9 rendering the composite media stream as it is streamed to produce the
10 multimedia content at the network client; and
11 varying the speed of the multimedia content depending on the speed
12 designation from the human user.

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14 2. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein:
15 the composite media stream has a timeline; and
16 the varying the speed of the multimedia content is performed by altering the
17 timeline of the composite media stream at the network server before streaming the
18 composite media stream.

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20 3. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:
21 storing multiple composite media streams at the network server
22 corresponding to particular multimedia content, each of the multiple composite
23 media streams having a timeline that is modified by a different degree; and
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1 selecting that composite media stream that most closely accords with the
2 speed designation and streaming that composite media stream from the network
3 server to the network client.

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5 4. A computer-readable storage medium containing a program for
6 streaming multimedia content to a network client, the program having instructions
7 that are executable by a network server to perform steps comprising:

8 receiving a speed designation for playback of the multimedia content at a
9 network client;

10 composing a composite media stream that represents the multimedia
11 content, the composite media stream having a timeline that is modified in
12 accordance with the speed designation;

13 streaming the timeline-modified composite media stream from the network
14 server to the network client.

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16 5. A computer-readable storage medium as recited in claim 4, further
17 comprising:

18 storing multiple media streams at the network server corresponding to the
19 multimedia content, said multiple media streams having timelines that are
20 modified by different degrees and including streams corresponding to at least first
21 and second media types, wherein media types of the first and second types can be
22 rendered in combination to produce the multimedia content;

1 the step of composing a composite media stream comprising a step of
2 selecting those stored media streams of the first and second types that have
3 modified timelines most closely according with the speed designation.

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5 6. A computer-readable storage medium as recited in claim 4, further
6 comprising:

7 determining available bandwidth from the network server to the network
8 client;

9 storing multiple media streams at the network server corresponding to the
10 multimedia content, the multiple media streams including streams corresponding
11 to at least first and second media types, wherein media types of the first and
12 second types can be rendered in combination to produce the multimedia content;

13 the media streams of the first type having timelines that are modified by
14 different degrees;

15 the media streams of the second type being of varying quality and requiring
16 varying bandwidth;

17 wherein the composing step comprises:

18 selecting one of the media streams of the first type that most closely
19 accords with the speed designation, wherein said selected one of the media
20 streams of the first type consumes part of the available bandwidth;

21 selecting one of the media streams of the second type that requires no more
22 bandwidth than the difference between the available bandwidth and the bandwidth
23 consumed by the selected one of the media streams of the first type.

1 7. A computer-readable storage medium as recited in claim 4, further
2 comprising:

3 determining available bandwidth from the network server to the network
4 client;

5 storing a plurality of audio streams representing the multimedia content, the
6 audio streams having timelines that are modified by different degrees;

7 storing a plurality of video streams representing the multimedia content, the
8 video streams being of varying quality and requiring varying bandwidth;

9 wherein one of the audio streams and one of the video streams can be
10 rendered in combination to produce the multimedia content;

11 wherein the composing step comprises:

12 selecting one of the audio streams having a timeline that most closely
13 accords with the speed designation, wherein said selected audio stream consumes
14 part of the available bandwidth;

15 selecting one of the video streams that requires no more bandwidth than the
16 difference between the available bandwidth and the bandwidth consumed by the
17 selected audio stream.

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19 8. A computer-readable storage medium as recited in claim 4, further
20 comprising:

21 determining available bandwidth from the network server to the network
22 client;

23 storing an audio stream representing the multimedia content;
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1 storing a plurality of video streams representing the multimedia content, the
2 video streams being of varying quality and requiring varying bandwidth;

3 wherein the audio streams and one of the video streams can be rendered in
4 combination to produce the multimedia content;

5 wherein the composing step comprises selecting one of the video streams
6 that requires no more bandwidth than the difference between the available
7 bandwidth and the bandwidth consumed by the audio stream when streamed at a
8 rate that is proportional to the speed designation.

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10 9. A computer-readable storage medium as recited in claim 4, further
11 comprising:

12 determining available bandwidth from the network server to the network
13 client;

14 storing an audio stream representing the multimedia content;

15 storing a plurality of video streams representing the multimedia content, the
16 video streams having different timelines and requiring varying bandwidth;

17 wherein the audio streams and one of the video streams can be rendered in
18 combination to produce the multimedia content;

19 wherein the composing step comprises selecting one of the video streams
20 that requires no more bandwidth than the difference between the available
21 bandwidth and the bandwidth consumed by the audio stream when streamed at a
22 rate that is proportional to the speed designation.

1 10. A method of obtaining and presenting multimedia content, the
2 method comprising:

3 selecting multimedia content that is available from a network server, the
4 multimedia content having first and second types of media content;

5 accepting a speed designation for playback of the multimedia content at a
6 network client;

7 determining available bandwidth from the network server to the network
8 client;

9 streaming a first individual media stream from the network server to the
10 network client at a rate that is proportional to the speed designation, the first
11 individual media stream representing the first type of media content and
12 consuming part of the available bandwidth;

13 selecting a second individual media stream that represents the second type
14 of media content, the second individual media stream being selected to have a
15 quality that requires no more bandwidth than the difference between the available
16 bandwidth and the bandwidth consumed by the first individual media stream;

17 streaming the second individual media stream from the network server to
18 the network client;

19 modifying the timeline of the first individual media stream at the network
20 client in accordance with the speed designation; and

21 rendering the first and second individual media streams at the network
22 client.

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1 11. A method as recited in claim 10, wherein the first individual media
2 stream is an audio stream and the second individual media stream is a video
3 stream.

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5 12. A method as recited in claim 10, further comprising modifying the
6 timeline of the second individual media stream in accordance with the speed
7 designation before it is streamed to the network client.